



**Committee:** Directly to Council

**Committee Review:** N/A

**Staff:** Linda McMillan, Senior Legislative Analyst  
Essie McGuire, Senior Legislative Analyst

**Purpose:** Receive briefing and have discussion – no vote expected

**Keywords:** Coronavirus, COVID-19

AGENDA ITEM #1A

January 4, 2022

**Discussion**

## SUBJECT

Updates from County Government and Montgomery County Public Schools – Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Health Planning

## EXPECTED ATTENDEES

Dr. Raymond Crowel, Director, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)

Dr. James Bridgers, Acting Chief Health Officer, (DHHS)

Dr. Earl Stoddard, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer

Sean O'Donnell, Program Administrator, Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response (DHHS)

James D'Andrea, Chief of Staff, Office of the Superintendent, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)

Heather Dublinske, Coordinator, Student Welfare and Compliance, (MCPS)

Stephanie Iszard, Coordinator, Student Health and Wellness (MCPS)

## COUNCIL DECISION POINTS & COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

- Council sitting as Board of Health to receive updates.

## DESCRIPTION/ISSUE

The Council will receive an update on the public health data and response to COVID-19.

## Background Information

### State and County Data on January 3, 2022 (Maryland.gov website)

	Confirmed Cases	Confirmed Deaths	Probable Deaths
Maryland	751,450	11,658	238
Montgomery County	113,356	1,714	52

On January 3, 2022, the Maryland.gov website reported the State's positivity rate was 26.87%.

On January 3, 2022, the CDC COVID<sup>1</sup> Tracker by county, showed that Montgomery County was in HIGH Community Transmission with a case rate of 1295.63 cases per 100,000 population for the last 7 days and a positivity rate of 14.96%.

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<sup>1</sup> Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID Tracker [https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view?list\\_select\\_state=Maryland&data-type=Risk&list\\_select\\_county=24031](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view?list_select_state=Maryland&data-type=Risk&list_select_county=24031)

The January 3, 2022, CDC COVID Tracker reports:

88.7% of the County population aged 5 years old and older is fully vaccinated.

83.3% of the TOTAL County population is fully vaccinated.

40.1% of the fully vaccinated population has a booster.

### **Montgomery County Case Metrics (from Montgomery County website)**

Montgomery County continues to monitor metrics regarding the spread and prevalence of COVID-19 in the community. The primary indicators follow the CDC Tracker which classifies metrics by Low, Moderate, Substantial, and High. The secondary metrics are classified as the county as Very High, High, Moderate, Low, or Very Low risk of transmission/utilization. Indicators can be viewed at:

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/covid19/data/>

#### ***Primary Indicators***

Number of cases per 100,000 residents in the past 7 days. As of January 2, 2022, there were 1200.5 cases per 100,000; which was a **HIGH** level of transmission.

Test positivity rate – 7-day average percentage of tests administered resulting in a positive case. The County website is not current due to issues with the Maryland Department of Health data feed. As noted on the previous page, the CDC Tracker reports a positivity rate of 14.96%.

#### ***Secondary Indicators***

Percent change in new cases per 100,000 population during the last seven days compared to the previous seven days. As of January 2, 2022, the rate was 83.1%; a **HIGH** risk of transmission.

Percent of hospital inpatient beds in the community that are occupied. As of January 1, 2022, 70.4% beds were occupied which is a **LOW** rate of utilization.

Percent of Intensive Care Unit (ICU) beds in use. As of January 1, 2022, 73.5% of ICU beds were in use which is a **LOW** rate of utilization.

Percent of inpatient beds in the community occupied by patients with COVID-19. As of January 1, 2022, 27.5% of beds were occupied with COVID-19 patients which is a **HIGH** rate of utilization.

### **Montgomery County Public Schools**

The January 2, 2022, Community Message can be found at

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/publicinfo/community/school-year-2021-2022/Community-Update-20220102-final.html>

The following is included in the message regarding data and the potential to transition a school to virtual learning if 5% or more of unrelated students/teachers/staff test positive in a 14-day period.

## **Data Reporting**

Through 10 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 1, there have been 3,686 positive cases reported among students and staff in MCPS during winter break. The number of cases in the school system over the last several weeks has increased significantly in line with trends across Maryland and the United States. As shared in our [Dec. 30 community update](#), we are taking a number of measures to keep students and staff safe.

You can view the number of positive cases over winter break at each school [at this link](#). Schools will not send community letters regarding cases reported during winter break. Beginning Monday, Jan. 3, a list of the number of positive cases reported at each school site that day will be reported at the top of the [COVID-19 Dashboard website](#) by 7 p.m. each school day. The dashboard will continue to report data on total positive cases and quarantines on a weekly basis.

## **Community Updates**

To keep families updated, throughout January, all members of the MCPS community will receive community update emails on Thursday afternoons, with the most up-to-date information regarding COVID-19 and the steps we are taking to keep students, staff, families and community members safe.

## **Individual School Transitions to Virtual Learning**

We are continuing to monitor cases on a daily basis. As shared previously, if 5% or more of unrelated students/teachers/staff members (minimum of 10 individuals) tests positive in a 14-day period, MCPS central office staff and the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) will work together to determine if students in the school should transition to virtual learning for 14 calendar days. Please note that the 5% threshold does not automatically result in school closure; the primary factor to consider will be the level of virus spread in the school.

Parents and guardians will be notified if a decision is made to transition to virtual learning. Currently, no school has reached the 5% threshold, so all schools are scheduled to open as planned tomorrow, Monday, Jan. 3. (Reminder – this community message was issued before MCPS announced the weather-related closure for January 3.)

## **MCPS also has a COVID-19 Dashboard:**

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/coronavirus/dashboard/>

The dashboard links to a variety of topics including vaccinations, quarantine, and contact tracing. It also links to case reports and community notification letters by school.

**Alternative format requests for people with disabilities.** If you need assistance accessing this report you may [submit alternative format requests](#) to the ADA Compliance Manager. The ADA Compliance Manager can also be reached at 240-777-6197 (TTY 240-777-6196) or at [adacompliance@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:adacompliance@montgomerycountymd.gov)